

Become A Special Educator in Tennessee

Feature Story

Tameshia Johnson
Graduate of Tennessee State University,
Nashville, Tennessee
Speech-Language Pathologist in Williamson County Schools,
Franklin, Tennessee



I am Tameshia Johnson from Oxford, Mississippi. When I began college, I elected to major in Environmental Biology. After losing interest in this major, I researched the area of Communicative Disorders and was invited to a clinic to observe a therapy session with a child who had been diagnosed with Autism. My interest in the profession was piqued at that moment, and I intensified my efforts to learn more about the field. Three and one-half years later, I earned the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communicative Disorders from the University of Mississippi.

Upon enrollment in graduate studies at Tennessee State University (TSU), I was indecisive about the preferred population age that I wanted to work with. My clinical observations took place in several sites, including an Elementary School, a Veterans' Administration Medical Center, and the Pediatrics Division of a large hospital. Upon completion of the practicum in the hospital settings, I felt certain that I wanted a career in some type medical environment.

Soon thereafter, I was introduced to the BASE-TN (Become A Special Educator in TN) Initiative, a Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education, sponsored program that provided tuition support contingent upon my serving as a Speech Language Pathologist in a Tennessee school system two years for each year of financial support received. Initially, I was hesitant about accepting a position in a kindergarten-12 school setting.

In June 2005, I was employed by the Williamson County Schools of Franklin, Tennessee where I am currently the Speech Language Pathologist at Sunset Elementary and Middle Schools. I absolutely love the environment! I know that I am making a significant difference in the lives of the students. At this time, I am uncertain as to whether I am interested in the medical aspect of Speech-Language Pathology anymore. Commitment, hard work and great effort can make a significant difference in the lives of children. The financial support of the BASE-TN Teaching Program and the rigid Speech-Language Program at Tennessee State University formed a partnership that enabled me to be in a position to serve students with speech and language disorders.

For more information about the BASE-TN Initiative,
visit www.k12.tn.us/BASE-TN
or call 1-888-212-3162.



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